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PRESS RELEASE – PA State Police Shooting, June, 23, 2012

July 2, 2012

The Franklin County District Attorney is issuing the following in relation to the events of the June 23, 2012 shooting at Bony Road, St. Thomas Township, Franklin County, PA, which resulted in the death of a suspect.

Having personally been present at the scene following the shooting, and having thoroughly reviewed all of the evidence gathered by the Troop H Headquarters, Major Case Team of the Pennsylvania State Police, I have determined that the response and actions taken by all Troopers involved were absolutely and unequivocally justified under the circumstances. As such, no further criminal investigation is requested or warranted in this matter.

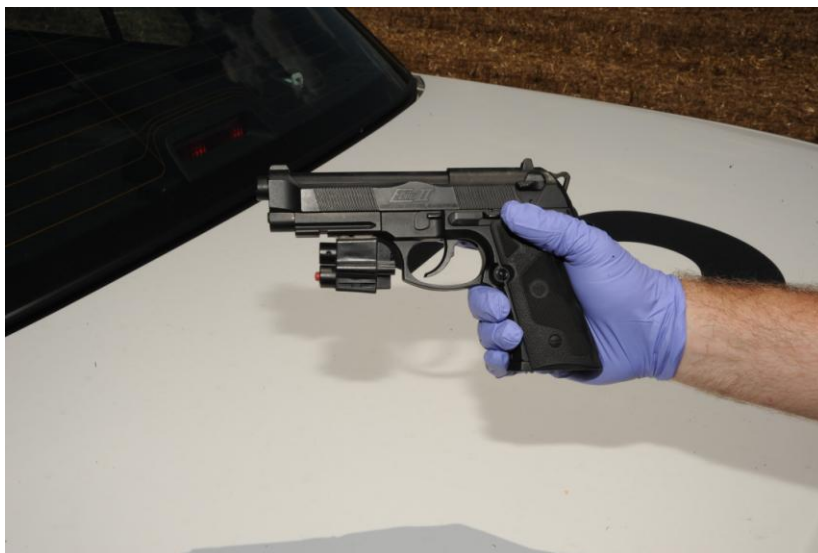
The community has a legitimate interest in being apprised of the circumstances which lead to the shooting and subsequent death of the suspect, and as such, the relevant facts are as follows:

On June 23, 2011, beginning at approximately 7:44 A.M., Franklin County 911 received telephone calls concerning a suspicious person from New York, in the area of Coble Road and (Edenville) Cheesetown Road in St. Thomas Township, Franklin County. The calls were forwarded to Pennsylvania State Police, Chambersburg Station, and Troopers were dispatched to the area. The callers described a disoriented man wandering through the street and house to house, wearing green camouflage clothing and carrying a backpack. Further, the callers indicated that the disoriented man approached homeowners requesting assistance with his vehicle, arousing suspicion (presumably given the time of day and his appearance). One homeowner refused to allow the suspect into his home and the suspect displayed a black handgun and told the homeowner, "Let me in or I will blow your (expletive) head off!" The handgun was described by the homeowner as a 9mm. After notifying law enforcement authorities, the callers then alerted their neighbors regarding the suspicious man headed in their direction and possibly to their homes. Their vigilant actions quite possibly saved innocent lives from death or very serious harm that morning.

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Four uniformed Troopers in separate, marked cruisers responded to the area, having received the above information. The dispatch message specifically described the suspect and indicated that the man in question was possibly armed. A male, precisely matching the description given by dispatch, was found inside a pick-up truck parked in the driveway of a residence on Bony Lane in St. Thomas Township. The pick-up truck was owned by the residents, who had heeded their neighbor's warning calls and left their home while Troopers were en route. Troopers opened the passenger side door of the pick-up and ordered the suspect to show his hands. The suspect displayed a handgun, and refused commands to place the weapon on the dash of the truck. A Trooper attempted to disarm the suspect by using a Taser, but was unsuccessful.

The suspect then opened the driver-side door of the pick-up truck, and while exiting, he pointed the handgun at a Trooper who was standing approximately 10 – 15 feet from the suspect. At that time, the suspect fired the handgun. Troopers then returned fire with their weapons, striking the suspect. A black colored handgun, resembling a Beretta-styled pistol, fell from the suspect's hands after he was struck by bullets from Troopers. The handgun was later discovered to be a Co2 powered BB gun. Pictures of the gun used by the deceased are below.



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Following the shooting, Troopers attempted to render first aid to the suspect, and medical personnel were requested.

The suspect was later determined to be Adam Schillinger of Saugerties, NY, and was 27 years old. The identity of the suspect was determined by a New York Driver License located in a backpack which had been placed inside the pick-up truck by the suspect. A handwritten “Last Will & Testament” (sic), dated 6/20/12 and signed “Adam Schillinger,” was located inside the pick-up truck. A four-page document was also found inside the pick-up truck, appearing to be a long suicide note. In the note, Schillinger indicates that he had just been to the Jersey Shore and had decided to “run away from life” because he probably didn’t have much longer to live. The note explains that he doesn’t “really understand happiness,” and that he has a “social phobia” and has “absolutely no friends.” Further, he notes that he wishes he could just wake up be “happy, normal.” He then writes, “I have felt like this my whole life and I just give up. I can’t take this life no more. I can’t hold down a job for any amount of time...I don’t fit into this world and I never will.” Regarding his apparent intent to end his life, and the method, Schillinger tells his readers that he is “taking the easy way out, but I’m gonna go out with a bang, I’m not just gonna kill myself, I’m gonna go a lil crazy before I do it.” Finally, he ends by telling several family members that he is sorry for “doing this.”

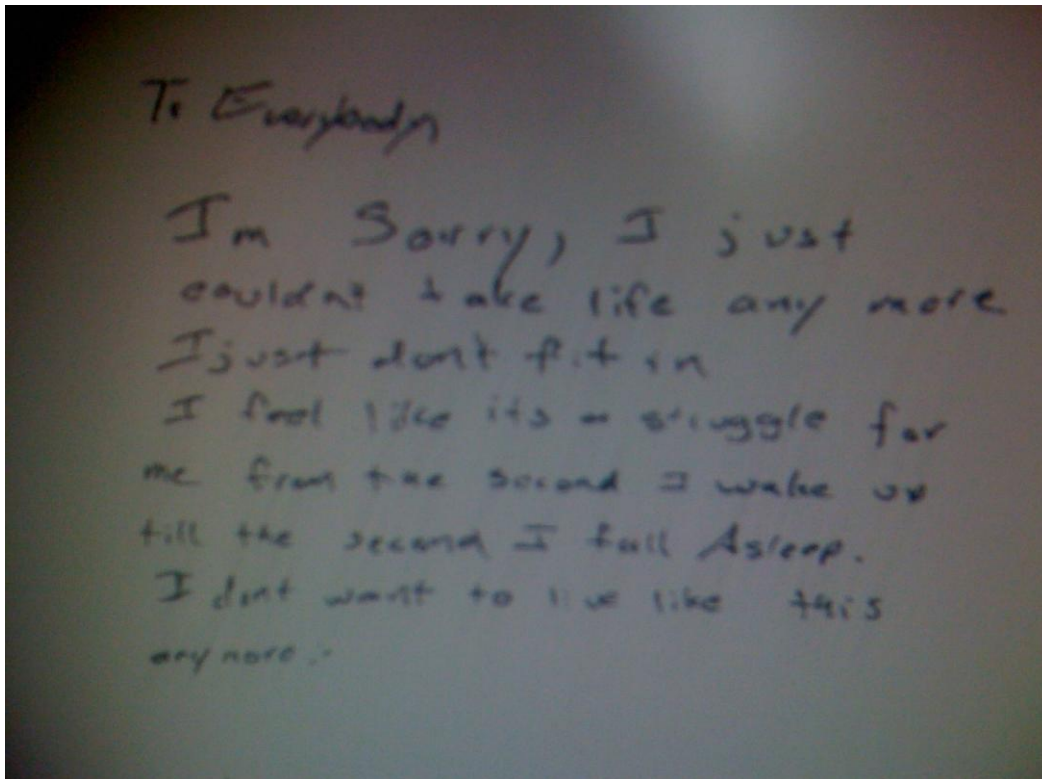
An unopened package of rope and an unopened roll of duct tape, as well as several hunting and pocket knives, were found within Schillinger’s backpack and his camouflage jacket. A picture of the knife found in his jacket follows:



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Later on the same date, a BB fell from the inside of the uniform pants of the Trooper who Schillinger pointed the handgun at and fired. The BB confirms that the suspect actually did fire the gun at the Trooper.

A day later, Schillinger's vehicle, a 2009 Ford Focus, blue in color, was located by Troopers on Edwards Drive, in St. Thomas Township, (within a few miles of Bony Lane). The vehicle was parked on the gravel roadway, the doors were unlocked, and the keys were in the ignition. The vehicle started and appeared to operate properly when examined by Troopers. Located on the front driver seat of the vehicle was the following handwritten note:



This incident may appropriately be described as 'suicide by cop.'

Special thanks are given to the vigilant neighbors who reported this suspect and alerted their neighbors. Given what we now know regarding Schillinger's final thoughts and intent to go out "with a bang," lives may have very well been saved, and needless harm and suffering avoided, due to their vigilance. Certainly, no one delights in taking the life of another, but the actions of these Troopers were utterly reasonable, appropriate and correct.